

REMARKS

Claims 1-31, 46-76, and 85-96 were pending in this application when the present Final Office Action was mailed. Claims 2-9, 11-20, 47-52, and 54-61 have been amended solely to change the dependencies of these claims. Claims 1, 10, 46, and 53 have been cancelled without commenting on or conceding the merits of the outstanding rejections, and without prejudice to pursuing these claims in a continuation, divisional, or other application. Accordingly, claims 2-9, 11-31, 47-52, 54-76, and 85-96 are now pending in the application.

More specifically, the status of the claims in light of the present Office Action is as follows:

(A) Claims 1, 4-9, 11-13, 17-20, 46, 47, 50-52, 54-56, 60, and 61 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,721,608 to Taniguchi ("Taniguchi");

(B) Claims 2, 3, 10, 14-16, 48, 49, 53, and 57-59 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of the corresponding base claims and any intervening claims; and

(C) Claims 21-31, 62-76, and 85-96 were indicated to be allowable.

A. Response to the Section 102 Rejection of Claims 1, 4-9, 11-13, 17-20, 46, 47, 50-52, 54-56, 60, and 61

Claims 1, 4-9, 11-13, 17-20, 46, 47, 50-52, 54-56, 60, and 61 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Taniguchi. Claims 1 and 46 have been cancelled without commenting on or conceding the merits of the outstanding rejection. Accordingly, the Section 102 rejection of claims 1 and 46 is now moot.

Claims 4-9, 11-13, and 17-20 have been amended to depend from allowable independent claim 87, and claims 47, 50-52, 54-56, 60, and 61 have been amended to depend from allowable independent claim 93. Accordingly, Taniguchi cannot support a

Section 102 rejection of these dependent claims for at least the reason that this reference cannot support a Section 102 rejection of base claims 87 and 93, and for the additional features of these dependent claims. Therefore, the rejections of claims 4-9, 11-13, 17-20, 47, 50-52, 54-56, 60, and 61 should be withdrawn.

B. Response to the Objection to Claims 2, 3, 10, 14-16, 48, 49, 53, and 57-59

Claims 2, 3, 10, 14-16, 48, 49, 53, and 57-59 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims, but were indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of the corresponding base claim and any intervening claims. In the previous paper filed by applicant on February 2, 2004, claims 10 and 53 were rewritten in independent form as new claims 87 and 93, respectively. Accordingly, claims 10 and 53 have been cancelled in this response without prejudice.

Claims 2, 3, and 14-16 have been amended to depend from allowable base claim 87, and claims 48, 49, and 57-59 have been amended to depend from allowable base claim 93. Therefore, the objections to claims 2, 3, 14-16, 48, 49, and 57-59 should be withdrawn.

C. Claims 21-31, 62-76, and 85-96 Are Allowed

Claims 21-31, 62-76, and 85-96 were allowed in the present Office Action and have not been amended by this paper.

D. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the claims pending in the application comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and patentably define over the applied art. A Notice of Allowance is, therefore, respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-3982.

Respectfully submitted,

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